



HEE FOREST TOUR—SPRING 2011

The Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment Forest Tour was held on Saturday, May 21, 2011. The tour started off in downtown Martinsville at the Morgan County Extension office with Brian MacGowan (Purdue FNR) giving an introduction to the project. After a short bus ride into Morgan-Monroe State Forest, the group discussed even-aged forest management with Lenny Farlee (Purdue FNR) at the Unit 3 clearcut on Main Forest Road.

Ken Kellner (Purdue FNR graduate student) discussed the impacts of timber harvests on small mammal communities. Participants were then given the opportunity to check a series of small mammal traps.

Three traps were occupied giving Ken the chance to demonstrate handling procedures. One white-footed mouse and a chipmunk quickly made their escape before landing in the handling bag. Another white-footed mouse was put on display for the entire group to see.



Brian MacGowan welcomes the group to the Unit 3 clearcut in Morgan-Monroe State Forest.



Ken Kellner gently extracts a white-footed mouse from one of the traps checked by tour participants.

In the uncut forest next to the clearcut, Rob Chapman (Purdue FNR) discussed the effects of forest management on woodland salamanders. Tour participants found a few salamanders while checking under the cover boards. Containers with live specimens were passed around, giving people the chance to see some of the more common salamander species up close and personal.

The tour then moved on to two older state forest property harvests, a single tree selection site and a small group selection cut, to demonstrate what the HEE's uneven-aged areas will look like in a few years. Lenny

Farlee explained the different types of uneven-aged management and how those methods can be applicable to the private woodland owner.

At the end of the tour, the 26 participants were given a short survey to help evaluate the program. Questions like

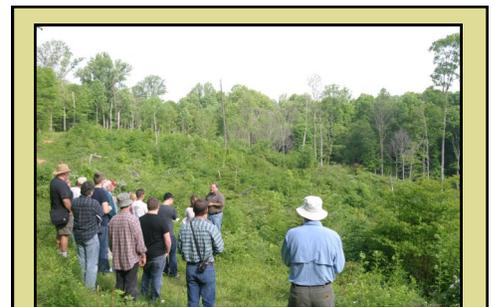
“What was the most and least useful part of the tour?”,

“How do you plan to use the information learned from this workshop?”, and

“Do you feel better able to manage your land as a result of this workshop?”

will help us to continue to develop quality educational opportunities for the public.

Thanks to all the participants, presenters, and especially Brian MacGowan and Chris Parker (Morgan County Extension) for organizing this event.

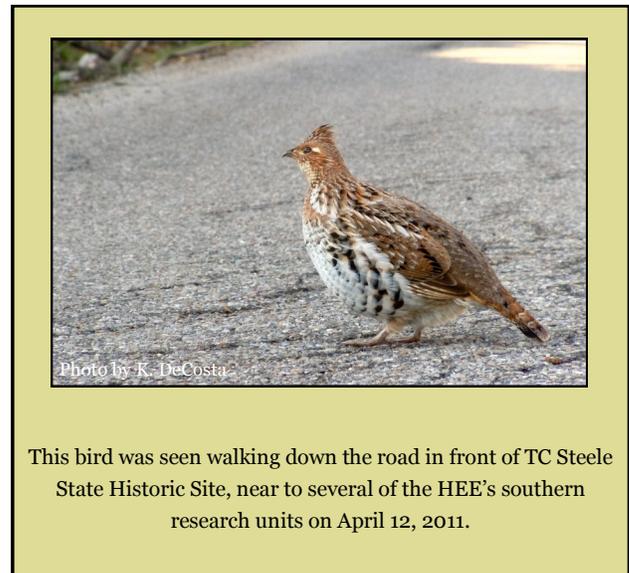


Lenny Farlee discusses different types of forest harvesting techniques that tour participants can use on their own private woodlands.

An Uncommon Bird

One uncommon bird is now receiving its own targeted survey within the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment. Ruffed Grouse are closely tied to the condition of the land and populations have historically fluctuated with changing land use. Once common throughout the state, the population is now limited to the forested hills of south central Indiana. The farm abandonment period of the early 1900's led to an increase in brushy woodlands and an increase in grouse numbers. However, as our forests continue to mature, grouse numbers have fallen to very low levels. Hunting is currently permitted in 25 southern Indiana counties including Morgan, Monroe, and Brown - the three counties where the HEE is centered.

To assess breeding populations, the Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife has been conducting spring roadside drumming surveys for the past several decades. No grouse were detected during the 2010 or 2011 surveys*.



With the implementation of the harvests in 2008, the HEE is creating areas of early successional habitat across the landscape. Earlier this year, we initiated a study to monitor Ruffed Grouse use of the HEE openings. Objectives for this study include: comparing use between openings of various sizes, monitoring changes in abundance at harvest areas over time, and identifying relatively frequently used sites for future research efforts. During March - April of 2011, HEE and Division of Forestry staff conducted early morning drumming surveys at each HEE opening. This is the peak period for grouse drumming in southern Indiana, and each location was surveyed three times.

Ruffed Grouse have been observed in and around the HEE research cores since harvesting was completed more than two years ago. However, no birds were detected during this initial survey. Drumming was heard in Unit 9 (even-aged management) just prior to the start of the survey period, but this individual was not heard during the actual survey.

While Ruffed Grouse typically avoid recent regeneration openings for drumming displays, detections are expected to increase in future years as habitat becomes more suitable for this important early-successional forest indicator.

*IN DFW Wildlife Management and Research Notes No. 2010, 2011 Spring Breeding Indices of Ruffed Grouse, Steven E. Backs

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB

www.HEEforeststudy.org

The Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment has a new and improved website! The site is now easier to navigate and contains a special "Researcher Only" page, allowing them to easily share information and access important files. One unique feature of the new site is the "Forest Gallery". This page showcases the 360° panoramic images that have been taken at the different harvest sites every spring since 2007. Be sure to check it out!

If you have been using the old url (www.fnr.purdue.edu/hee), please update your links. The new url is <http://www.ag.purdue.edu/programs/hee>.

The www.HEEforeststudy.org web address has not changed and will take you directly to the new site.



Field Crews Began in May

What's going on this summer?

- Timber Rattlesnake tracking
- Aural bird surveys
- Cerulean Warbler surveys
- Bat sampling
- Wood-boring beetle collections
- Moth and butterfly collections
- Nightjar surveys
- Barred Owl productivity surveys
- Small mammal trapping
- Deer exclosure vegetation sampling

Do you have pictures from any HEE related event or activity?

If so, you can submit them to the HEE Project Coordinator for archiving. Please include any information about the pictures.



North American Forest Ecology Workshop

Mike Saunders (Purdue FNR) will be attending the North American Forest Ecology Workshop (NAFEW) in Roanoke, VA later this June where he will announce the next conference location—Indiana.

The 2013 NAFEW will be hosted by Purdue University, and the HEE will likely be a prime field trip location. This conference will provide opportunities for HEE researchers to share their findings with an international audience of scientists and land managers.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Two of the HEE's graduate students have now moved on to bigger and better things.

Natasha Urban (small mammal research) and Andrea Currylow (box turtle research) have both recently completed their M.S. theses from Purdue University.

Congratulations Natasha and Andrea!



HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

Please send your news, findings, tid-bits, publications, funding opportunities, and committee reports to Rebecca at rkalb@purdue.edu to be included in "The HEE Update."

"The HEE Update" is distributed to anyone interested in receiving updates on the HEE Project—you need not be actively involved in the project. If you know of someone that would like periodic updates on HEE, we can add them to the list!

Previous issues of "The HEE Update" are available on our website:

www.HEEForestStudy.org.